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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, we are transient creatures who long for a sense of permanence. Give us that permanence as we find in You our fixed and abiding center of faith.

Lord, we praise You because You are changeless, without any variableness in Your judgment and mercy. Strengthen our lawmakers for the challenges of our times. Keep them in the shadow of Your wings, and teach them to show mercy. Use Your powerful arm to rescue our Nation from the hands of all enemies of freedom. Let the tranquility of Your dominion increase until the Earth is filled with the knowledge of Your love.

We pray in Your glorious Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 14, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Brent Neiman, of Illinois, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

RUSSIA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, earlier today, two Russian military aircraft conducted an unsafe intercept with an unmanned U.S. surveillance drone that was operating within international airspace over the Black Sea.

This intercept was so dangerous and so brazen that the U.S. Air Force was forced to crash their drone into international waters. It is another reckless act by President Putin and his military, and I want to tell Mr. Putin: Stop this behavior before you are the cause of an unintended escalation.

We have seen this behavior from the Russian military before, and it will not deter the United States from conducting operations over the Black Sea. These aggressive actions by Russian aircraft are risky and could lead—I repeat—to unintended escalation.

The United States has routinely flown over the Black Sea since before Putin's illegal and reckless invasion of Ukraine, and I am confident our military will continue to do so.

SILICON VALLEY BANK

Mr. President, now, over the weekend, as we all know, the U.S. banking system faced a significant threat after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank. If the damage had spread across our financial system, the deposits and savings of tens of millions of families and small businesses could have been at serious risk.

Today, as we speak, thankfully, our banking system is stable thanks to the work of the Biden administration, the Federal Reserve, and the FDIC on Sunday. I thank the President, the Federal Reserve, and the FDIC for taking swift action to preserve confidence in the banking system, and the American people can rest assured that bank regulators have acted quickly and are doing everything they can to protect consumers.

In the days and weeks to come, Congress will look closely at what caused the run on Silicon Valley Bank and how we can prevent similar events in the future.

AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE

Mr. President, now, later today, I will take the first procedural steps to take up legislation repealing the Iraq AUMFs of 1991 and 2002.

• This “buller” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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